

**NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, August 16, 2018,
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – August 16, 2018

PRESENT: Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Douglas DeRito

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon, High School Principal Dr. Richard Sanzo, Business Manager Craig McClain, and Board of Finance Chairman Wes Marsh.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. August 2, 2018 - Regular Meeting - Approved by consensus with the correction that the motion regarding the ED099 - Child Nutrition Programs was made by Samantha Mannion instead of Rick Regan.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman's Report - Chairman Peggy Katkocin noted that she attended the recent CABA Conference with BOE members Dominic Cipollone and Rick Regan along with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon on August 13th. Main topics discussed were:

- Comparing test scores from students in Massachusetts to Connecticut
- Building good relationships between First Selectmen, Boards of Finance and Boards of Education.

B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:

- Everyone is busy getting ready for the opening of schools.
- Teacher Orientation for new staff will be held on next Wednesday and Thursday.
- Convocation will be held on Friday, August 24th.
- August 27th and 28th are Professional Learning Days for the teachers.

C. Committee Reports

1. **Business Operations/Resource Management** - Ed Sbordone noted that they met on August 16th and discussed the budget surplus from 2007-2018. The preliminary amount for the surplus is approximately \$65,000. They discussed expenses for this year for the month of July. He noted that approximately 8% of the budget is usually spent by this point in the year but 13% has been spent for the month of July primarily due to Special Education. This will be discussed further in the future.

D. Liaison Reports

1. **Board of Finance** - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on August 15th. The BOF did not approve the additional appropriation of \$120,000 for an additional SRO for the schools. This was mainly due to the procedure.

2. **Parks and Recreation Commission** - Greg Flanagan noted that the Parks and Rec Commission met on August 13th and discussed the following:

- There have been no recent issues with the bathrooms at Rebel Turf.
- The P&R Commission is considering putting carpet in the entranceway to the bathrooms at Rebel Turf.
- Possibility of putting lights at the basketball court at the high school.
- There will be a Food Truck festival at the high school on Oct. 14th.
- There will be a Christmas Light Festival in December sponsored by Parks and Rec.

3. **School Start Time Committee** - Kathy Baker noted that the committee met today which included Dr. Cosentino, Dr. McKinnon, all four principals, the Athletic Director and some parents. They discussed goals and assigned subcommittees and team members for these goals. They will meet again in September.

4. **School Security and Safety Committee** - Samantha Mannion noted that this committee met on August 7th. The Say Something Initiative had training in July and it is hopeful that it will be implemented in November. There are a few minor tweaks to be done to the Memorandum of Understanding between the district and the State Police but it is hopeful that this will come to the BOE for approval by the next meeting. The Additional Appropriation for an SRO will be discussed further on the agenda.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. **Shepaug High School Agriscience STEM Program Update** - Dr. Jason McKinnon noted that he attended the meeting regarding the Agriscience program at Shepaug High School. New Fairfield is currently sending some students to Nonnawaug High School. The Agriscience program at Shepaug will take students from the western part of the state and will open next year. He spoke of the logistics of sending students there.

B. **Back to School Meeting with the Commissioner** - Dr. Costentino noted that she attended a meeting with State Education Commissioner Dianna Wentzell yesterday in

Hartford. Main topics discussed including upcoming changes to the State and the Education Committee.

C. 2018 CABA Summer Leadership Conference - Dr. Costentino encouraged Board members to attend CABA Conferences in the future.

D. Negotiations Update - Dr. Costentino noted that they are currently in negotiations with paraprofessionals. The first meeting of the negotiations with the teachers will be next week. The custodians will have a meeting in the near future.

E. Superintendent's Goals - Dr. Costentino spoke of her preliminary goals and invited Board members to make comments through Google docs. She discussed the following SMART goals:

- High quality instruction, especially in STEM.
- Improve student achievement measurable through multiple measures.
- Closing the achievement gaps between typical students and special education students. Encourage more special education students to stay in district.
- Have meaningful Professional Development.
- Support the development of social and emotional learning.
- Ongoing communications between the school and community.
- Develop a Communications, Public Relations and Marketing plan.
- Work on the Capital needs plan.
- Institute best practices for Technology plans.
- Present an effective and responsible budget.
- Review school start times.
- Work with BOE members.

F. Superintendent's Evaluation Timeline - The Board discussed the Superintendent's goals and suggested making it available to the public. Dr. Cosentino discussed the timeline for the goals.

G. Superintendent's Evaluation Form- Dr. Costentino and the Board spoke of the timeline for her evaluation.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the corrected version of the Personnel Report for August 14, 2018, as recommended by the administration. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

B. Approval of New Position - Crossing Guard at Consolidated School

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the new position – Crossing Guard at Consolidated School. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

C. SRO Coverage for New Fairfield Middle School

Samantha Mannion spoke of the School Safety and Security Committee recommendation to hire an officer dedicated to the Middle School. Chairman Peggy Katkocin noted that she contacted the BOE Chairman in Newtown and noted that Newtown just had a review of their community and offered to share the presentation with New Fairfield. Ed Sbordone spoke of the procedure and timeline for this.

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the request for SRO coverage for New Fairfield Middle School pending funding by the Town of New Fairfield. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

D. Paraprofessional Grievance - Executive Session

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Greg Flanagan read of a letter from resident John McCartney encouraging the town to hire an additional SRO instead of using police overtime for the schools. (This letter is to be attached to the minutes of this meeting.)

X. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - The Board members made the following comments:

- Dominic Cipollone encouraged parents to get students prepared for the beginning of the school year.
- Kim LaTourette thanked the administration and staff for the Summer Enrichment programs.
- Rick Regan noted that he was misquoted in the Town Tribune recently and clarified that he said that the district was in the minority for districts that improved on the SAT in Math.
- Ed Sbordone noted that the August 22nd Policy subcommittee will be at 6:00 p.m. instead of 6:30 p.m. He will see everyone at the Convocation on August 24th.
- Samantha Mannion wanted to confirm that the Memorandum of Understanding between the BOE and the State Police will be on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Peggy Katkocin also encouraged parents to start getting students ready for the beginning of school.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING PARAPROFESSIONAL GRIEVANCE

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:14 p.m. to discuss a paraprofessional grievance and to invite Dr. Costentino, Cynthia Ross-Zweig and Frank Pizzaro into the Executive Session. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:54 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

August 14, 2018

To: the members of the Board of Education

From: John McCartney

Subject: Implementing and Funding SROs long-term

As I am out of town this week and unable to attend your meeting and make this public comment, I would ask that you read this into the record for the meeting. Thank you.

The New Fairfield Police Committee was formed and first met in January 2016 and was charged with providing recommendations as to the future of the Police Department in New Fairfield. This came at a time when the cost charged the town for State Troopers was increasing significantly.

After a comprehensive review and analysis, the Police Committee gave its recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on November 22, 2016 (not quite 2 years ago). I was a member of that committee and did much of the analysis.

The documents used in our work and our recommendations are available on the Town Website.

I bring this up because you (the Board of Education, "the general agent of the State in carrying out the will of the people of the district in matters of public education"), the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Finance, and the School Safety Committee are looking at school safety, specifically how to implement and fund SROs for our schools. As an interim measure, you covered the remainder of last year's 2 added SROs using overtime. You then budgeted for 2 SROs for the entire coming school year calculated based on Overtime as an interim placeholder, until the Safety Audit was received, and you could evaluate the best approach to the solution.

Using the same approach to analysis we used in the Police Committee, I have looked at Overtime as a solution. The current town approved budget includes 3 SROs (2 using Overtime). You may be considering going to 4 SROs, so I included that as well. I have provided you a copy of this analysis.

This analysis shows that using the actual average pay for our officers, with 2 SROs based on overtime, our officers would work 51% overtime and that is the equivalent of 2 full time officers. Going to 3 SROs based on overtime, our officers would work 68% overtime, the equivalent of 2.7 full time officers. Simplistically, this is how many officers at straight pay the overtime would pay for. This doesn't include the State troopers.

When you look at the full New Fairfield Police Force as a whole (including the State Troopers), with 2 SROs based on overtime, we have the equivalent officers of 2.9 and with 3 SROs based on overtime, we have 3.6 equivalent officers. I should point out that this is based on annual pay. SROs don't work the full year under the overtime approach so the percentage of overtime our officers will be working during the school year is much higher than the annualized numbers.

One might argue that it is cheaper to use overtime than to add a full-time officer because there are other costs involved. While this is true, it may miss a more important question or two.

Should we want our police officers working more than 50% to 68+% overtime during the school year?

Can they be effective working that much? Will they be too fatigued to make good decisions and protect and serve New Fairfield?

I have provided an article, **The Alarming Consequences of Police Working Overtime** from October 2017. It begins by saying "Fatigue is bad for any work environment. But for police, the stakes are much higher. Officers have to respond to late-night calls, make split second decisions and de-escalate tense situations."

I feel the overtime approach to adding 2 SROs at the end of last year worked as a quick interim solution. I believe we are now looking for an ongoing solution and I do not feel the overtime approach for 2 or 3 SROs is the best approach long term and I do not feel it is sustainable.

If 3 or 4 SROs are to be part of New Fairfield, we should be looking for **the best long-term solution and develop a plan to get us there.**

I encourage the boards to request a police and state trooper proforma on scheduling and man hours for the year (including time already worked from the beginning of the year, July 1, and broken down by month) showing both planned regular time and overtime (including covering the 2 and 3 additional SROs). This should give you a better look at how (or if) the overtime approach can work. While a concern might be raised that this is information that the Town would not want public, such information could be kept confidential on the basis of town safety and/or school safety, so it shouldn't be an issue.

I also encourage the Board to ask these questions as you decide the best approach to take for the people of New Fairfield:

What should our policy be regarding how long officers can work in any given week?

Do we really want our officers working 50% overtime, 68% overtime, or more on an ongoing basis?

What solution will provide the most effective result for all of New Fairfield in what we as a town are trying to accomplish?

Attachments:

Historic Analysis updated 180808

Alarming Consequences of Police Working Overtime